



Appendix 7 – Complaints Procedure

- 1 Our aim is to give you a good service at all times. However, if you have a complaint you are invited to let us know as soon as possible.
- 2 Please note that the Legal Ombudsman, the independent complaints body for service complaints about lawyers, will only deal with complaints from consumers. This means that only complaints from the barrister's client are within the jurisdiction of the Legal Ombudsman.
- 3 Non-clients who have a complaint and are not satisfied with the outcome of the Chambers' investigation should then contact the Bar Standards Board rather than the Legal Ombudsman.
- 4 It should be noted that it may not always be possible to investigate a complaint brought by a non-client. This is because the ability of Chambers to properly investigate and resolve such matters may be limited and complaints of this nature are often better suited to the disciplinary processes maintained by the Bar Standards Board. Therefore, Chambers will make an initial assessment of the complaint and if they feel that the issues raised cannot be satisfactorily resolved through the Chambers complaints process they will refer you to the Bar Standards Board.

Complaints Made by Telephone

- 5 You may wish to make a complaint in writing and, if so, please follow the procedure in paragraph 7 below. However, if you would rather speak on the telephone about your complaint then please telephone 0121 233 7500 and ask to speak to James Farmer, Chief Executive, who is the individual nominated under the Chambers Complaints Procedure to deal with complaints. If the complaint is about James Farmer, please telephone the Head of Chambers, Andrew Tucker.

The person you contact will make a note of the details of your complaint and what you would like done about it. He will discuss your concerns with you and aim to resolve them. If the matter is resolved he will record the outcome, check that you are satisfied with the outcome and record that you are satisfied. You may also wish to record the outcome of the telephone discussion in writing.

- 6 If your complaint is not able to be resolved on the telephone you will be invited to write to us about it so it can be investigated formally.

Complaints made in Writing

- 7 Please give the following details:
 - Your name and address;
 - Which member(s) of Chambers you are complaining about;
 - The detail of the complaint; and



- What you would like done about it.

Please address your letter and either send it in the post or email it to

Matthew Fleming
Senior Practice Manager
Cornwall Street Barristers
85-87 Cornwall Street
Birmingham
B3 3BY

m.fleming@cornwallstreet.co.uk

- 8 Where a complaint against a barrister appears to involve a claim for money or professional negligence the barrister's professional indemnity insurers will be notified.
- 9 Your complaint will be investigated by James Farmer. If your complaint is about James Farmer then the complaint should be addressed to, and will be handled by one of our Deputy Heads of Chambers.

We will notify you as soon as possible and, in any event, within 3 working days of receiving the complaint that it is under investigation. We will advise you at that stage when you should expect our full reply to your complaint.

- 10 In any event we will aim wherever possible to have investigated your complaint and to write to you with our reply within 28 days of the complaint being received.

The reply to your complaint will set out:

- The nature and scope of the investigation;
- The conclusion on each complaint and the basis for the conclusions; and
- If the person investigating finds that you are justified in your complaint, their proposals for resolving the complaint.

Confidentiality

- 11 All conversations and documents relating to the complaint will be treated as confidential and will be disclosed only to the extent that is necessary. Disclosure will be to the Head of Chambers, members of our management committee and to anyone involved in the complaint and its investigation. Such people will include the barrister or staff member who you have complained about. The Bar Standards Board is entitled to inspect the documents and seek information about the complaint when discharging its auditing and monitoring functions.



Our Policy

- 12 As part of our commitment to client care we make a written record of any complaint and retain all documents and correspondence generated by the complaint for a period of 6 years. Our Management Committee periodically considers an anonymised record of complaints with a view to improving services.

Complaints to the Legal Ombudsman

- 13 If your complaint falls within the jurisdiction of the Legal Ombudsman and you are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation, or the matter has not been resolved between you and Chambers within 8 weeks of the initial enquiry, then you may take the matter directly to the Legal Ombudsman. The Legal Ombudsman is the independent complaints body for complaints about lawyers.

Ordinarily, the Ombudsman is not able to consider your complaint until it has first been investigated by Chambers.

Please note that the Legal Ombudsman asks that you refer any matter to them within 6 months of your last contact with Chambers regarding your complaint.

You can write to them at:

Legal Ombudsman
PO Box 6167
Slough
SL1 0EH

Telephone number: 0300 555 0333

Email: enquiries@legalombudsman.org.uk

- 14 If you are not the barrister's client and are unhappy with the outcome of our investigation then please contact the Bar Standards Board at:

Bar Standards Board
Professional Conduct Department
289-293 High Holborn
London
WC1V 7JZ

Telephone number: 0207 6111 444

Website: www.barstandardsboard.org.uk